

March 20, 1979

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now are the counsellors and the school psychiatrists if your schools are fortunate to have one. Mr. Clerk, is the amendment ready?

SENATOR MARSH: Mr. Clerk.

SENATOR VENDITTE: Mr. Clerk, would you please read the amendment?

CLERK: Bear with me, Senator. Madam President, Senator Venditte moves to amend the bill by inserting a new section to read as follows: (Read Venditte amendment found on page 1012 of the Legislative Journal.) And I believe that is the new language. Is it not, Senator?

SENATOR VENDITTE: That is correct, Mr. Clerk, and Madam Chairman and members of the Legislature, what the amendment does is simply this. It doesn't spell out just exactly what a school system would be teaching when we are talking about Developmental Disabilities. It would be up to that school board as to what kinds of disabilities they felt were most important to be taught and inculcated in their school curriculum. I think that if we were to spell out every developmental disability it would probably take two pages, that of course being the total number of disabilities that we have but I think when we leave it just at Developmental Disabilities, obviously I think the school board would know that we are talking about mental retardation. We are talking about other physical abnormalities that are very prominent within society such as epilepsy, such as multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy and the like. That is pretty much the thrust of the amendment. It is one that as I said before has been voted down twice by the Legislature and I just was hoping that perhaps if I could grab your ear for a couple of minutes I would at least put in the proper perspective what is actually being taught at the public schools today. The concern that I have is really this. If in fact this amendment should pass, who would then teach? Who would have the qualifications and the knowledge and the background to be able to teach as early as next year? Frankly I don't think we have those people at this point in time to be able to provide a mass instructional course such as one that we are trying to mandate here and, Madam Chairman, perhaps maybe this question should have been addressed to the Chair earlier. The primary intent of the bill of course deals with physical examinations for all students prior to entering first and seventh grade and requires immunization and the like. Would this particular amendment be germane, Madam Chairman?